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Letter dated 21 December 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution 2149 (2014), by which the Council established the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), and Security Council resolution 2217 (2015), by which the Council decided that MINUSCA would include 2,080 authorized police personnel, including 40 corrections officers.

As you are aware, I am deeply concerned by the volatile security situation in Bangui. The lack of national capacity to manage and secure prisons adequately is an area of critical concern. During the violent incidents that took place in Bangui in September 2015, 689 prisoners, including some high-profile individuals, escaped from Bangui Central Prison with the complicity of the Forces armées centrafricaines (FACA), who were in charge of controlling access to the prison. The prison suffered major infrastructure damage as a result. This incident, along with other prison escapes, has undermined security and the fight against impunity.

Currently, the transitional authorities are detaining 12 high-profile individuals in the Camp de Roux detention facility located in the FACA military camp in Bangui. Among them are leaders of the anti-Balaka and ex-Séléka armed groups. In the absence of national corrections officers, untrained FACA elements are currently securing these detainees, with limited support from a small number of MINUSCA corrections officers and other United Nations peacekeepers from the MINUSCA task force deployed to secure the external perimeter of the premises.

It is anticipated that the security situation in Bangui will continue to be very fragile, following the referendum on 13 December 2015. More arrests should be expected, including as a result of the implementation of the mandate of MINUSCA with regard to urgent temporary measures. Since the reopening of Bangui Central Prison on 12 December 2015, 89 detainees have been transferred to it. There continues to be an inadequate number of trained national prison personnel to manage security. MINUSCA is therefore working with the transitional authorities to increase the number of qualified prison personnel deployed both at the prison and at Camp de Roux.

Holding perpetrators and instigators of serious crimes accountable and recapturing those who escaped from Bangui Central Prison remain key priorities and should help to deter spoilers attempting to derail the elections and the peace process. An additional deployment of qualified, government-provided corrections personnel is critical to supporting the efforts of MINUSCA in fighting impunity, in

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conjunction with the expected establishment of the Special Criminal Court and the implementation of its mandate on urgent temporary measures.

Sixty-eight additional government-provided corrections personnel with the requisite skill set are needed to support security management at Camp de Roux and Bangui Central Prison. I would therefore be grateful if the Council would authorize an increase in the current strength of MINUSCA corrections officers from 40 to 108. To lessen the likelihood of prison incidents, including escapes, these additional officers will mentor, train and build the capacity of national uniformed personnel and/or national corrections personnel in security management, 24 hours per day, seven days per week. They will help to address the current limitations of the Government in securing the high-profile detainees at Camp de Roux, while ensuring the security and safety of United Nations personnel.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon